

REMARKS

Claims 29-53 are pending in the application after this amendment. The cancellation and/or addition of claims is not to be considered in any way an indication of applicant's position on the merits of the cancelled and/or added claims. The rejections set forth in the February 28, 2007 Office action are respectfully traversed, and detailed arguments are set forth below.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-14, 16-17, 21-22, 24-26, and 28 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,281,692 to Bodenweber et al. (the "Bodenweber reference"). The Examiner rejected claims 12, 23, and 27 under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over the Bodenweber reference. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

For the purpose of furthering prosecution, applicant has canceled the previously submitted claims and presented new claims. Applicant, however, reserves the right to file continuation applications to pursue protection on alternative claims (including claims that describe any of the several preferred embodiments of the guides themselves). Applicant respectfully submits that the currently pending claims are in a condition for allowance.

The claims are directed to methods that use a guide that may guide, lead, and/or direct a tip towards a transmission path. The guide preferably includes at least one guide insulator having at least one insulated exterior surface. The guide insulator preferably defines at least one passageway or bore such that each passageway has a first tip passageway end and a second transmission path passageway end. In use, the user would place the guide over the transmission paths to be monitored or tested by inserting the transmission paths through the second passageway end such that the transmission paths are accessible through the passageway. The user would then insert each of the test probe tips into respective first passageway ends opposite the respective transmission paths. Preferred embodiments of the guide use only a few passageways so that the guides are able to be placed in smaller spaces and may be usable with more types of circuit board components. The guides may also have general protection

properties such as protecting transmission paths from damage caused by accidental probing, dropping of heavy items thereon, dropping of conductive items thereon, or any contacting that is unwanted.

The Bodenweber reference describes a completely different device in which the interposer is associated with the test probe, not the device to be tested. The method for using Bodenweber device is essentially the opposite of the presently claimed methods. As described at column 4, lines 8-21, the Bodenweber device is typically used with a stationary test bed that may be part of a table or workbench. In operation, the interposer would be placed on the stationary test bed (which is the device that does the testing). The pogo pin contactor would protrude into the second passageway and make contact with the conductive element. Since the conductive element is freely moveable within the central portion, the conductive element would move upwardly in conjunction with the upward movement of the pogo pin contactor. Then, the input/output pins of the ceramic substrate to be tested would be brought into contact with the conductive element and thus may be tested by the test bed.

In previous communications applicant presented arguments including that (1) the Bodenweber device is nonanalogous to the device used in the presently claimed methods, (2) Bodenweber is not concerned with the same considerations and/or problems with which applicants are concerned, (3) the Bodenweber device is connected to the test probes, (4) the Bodenweber device must be made for each size and shape of the devices to be tested, and (5) the Bodenweber device does not have general protection properties (e.g. protecting transmission paths from damage caused by accidental probing, dropping of heavy items thereon, dropping of conductive items thereon, or any contacting that is unwanted). Incorporated herein (without repetition) are the specific recitation of the facts and the specific arguments found in previous papers.

The currently pending claims are directed to a method that is clearly distinct from the method described in the Bodenweber. Whereas the Bodenweber method calls for first placing the interposer on the stationary test bed (the device that

does the testing) and then bringing the combined interposer/test bed into contact with the input/output pins of the ceramic substrate to be tested are brought into contact with the conductive element. The currently pending claims specify "interconnecting said guide insulator with a circuit board component" and "probing said transmission path by inserting a tip of an electronic test probe into said tip passageway end [of the guide]." Some of the claims further specify that the interconnecting step is done prior to the probing step. Some of the claims further specify "removing said tip of said electronic test probe while said guide insulator remains interconnected with said circuit board component." As mentioned, the method for using Bodenweber device is essentially the opposite of the presently claimed methods. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the Bodenweber reference does not teach or suggest the methods as claimed.

Although the Examiner did not specifically reject the previous claims over U.S. Patent No. 6,208,155 to Barabi et al. (the "Barabi reference"), applicant would like to remind the Examiner that the Barabi reference, like the Bodenweber reference, describes a device in which the test socket is associated with the test probe, not the device to be tested. A detailed discussion of this reference is set forth in previous communications. Incorporated herein (without repetition) are the specific recitation of the facts and the specific arguments found in previous papers.

Although the Examiner did not specifically reject the previous claims over U.S. Patent No. 6,281,695 to Chung, et al. (the "Chung reference"), applicant would like to remind the Examiner that the Chung reference describes an integrated circuit package pin indicator that may include probe guides. At no time is a transmission path at least partially accommodated within a Chung probe guide. A detailed discussion of this reference is set forth in the original application. Incorporated herein (without repetition) are the specific recitation of the facts and the specific arguments found in previous papers.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the currently pending claims are patentable. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to reexamine the application, to allow the claims, and to pass the application on promptly to issue.

Application No. 10/781,146
Amendment dated May 14, 2007
Reply to Office action of February 28, 2007

Please charge Deposit Account No. 50-2115 for any additional fees that may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Oster', written over a horizontal line.

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